

## **Parish of the Resurrection Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes**

**Sunday, October 11, 2020 at 6 pm via Zoom**

**Present:** Sharon Gidumal, Mary Beth Coté, Pat Sormani, Linda Malm, Mike Reis, Jane Hanson, Deacon John, Jack Sanders, Joe McClory, Nancy Maloney (for Julie Edmiston), Joe Quinn. **Absent:** Fr. Greg **Guests:** Dick Schwer, Debbie Seymour, Bill Mooney, Jim Lennon

### **1. Call to order**

Sharon called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm and addressed typical rules for running the meeting since there were several visitors. Participants were asked to please raise their hand in order to speak. Mary Beth mentioned the Zoom chat function for the benefit of those who were only connected by audio.

### **2. Prayer/Reading and Reflection**

Sharon offered some prayers in the time of covid.

### **3. Amendment/Approval of July 2020 Minutes**

The minutes were approved with one minor correction.

### **4. Feedback on pastoral council retreat**

Angie led us through a retreat dealing with women in the church and racial injustice. Sharon asked if anyone wanted to comment.

\* Joe McClory thought Angie did a good job. The poems were thoughtful, and she did a good job leading the reflections.

\* John concurred with Joe, but thought it could have been better attended.

\* Linda agreed with Joe McClory's comment.

\* Mary Beth wanted to thank Fr. Greg for providing the meal and Sharon's husband for picking up the food.

\* Jane said she was not able to be there due to being with her granddaughter.

### **5. Feedback on connecting with parishioners**

Some people provided reports – for example, Joe McClory –and had more feedback to write up. The feedback was related to things such as people being willing to bring communion to others. Mary Beth did a great job coordinating.

Sharon asked for people to send any pertinent comments, things to bring to people's attention, or any urgent needs. Mary Beth said we don't need all the comments, just things we need to know –death, illness, food needs, etc. We should send them to Mary Beth and she will forward appropriately. We were asked to use our judgement about what needs to be communicated.

### **6. Pastoral Council / Resurrection goals for next several months (what we want / how to accomplish)**

**a. Bring Christ to Others**

Fr. Greg wants to do this more than anything else. It's his main objective. Some things have already started. Fr. Greg's homily today talked about needs being matched up with people who can help. Sharon said 21 people signed up saying they are willing to cook a meal, deliver a meal (after Mass this morning).

**b. Attract New Parishioners to Resurrection**

Fr. Greg also wants to continue this effort. We could do some marketing type activities, about Resurrection being a great place, and a safe place to come and worship.

**c. Moving Forward on Issues that Matter**

- Women and the Church
- Racial Injustice

So these are 4 pretty big goals. Sharon asked for brainstorming at the meeting.

Items a, b, and c were discussed at some length and the discussion is summarized below.

Regarding bringing Christ to others, Sharon asked for ideas. Are the calls enough? Should we do more, maybe every couple of months? What about the meal program that Fr. Greg initiated?

Jack said he is giving a 15 minute presentation at a Jewish Family Services Zoom meeting in November; he is representing the diocese and Native Americans, pertaining to his heritage and racism, and plans to mention he is Catholic and at Resurrection. It should be a broad audience, and perhaps some people will be interested in the parish. Sharon asked if he will actively "sell" Resurrection. Jack said he has to be deferential since other faith communities will also be tuned in, and there will be a large Jewish population in the meeting.

Sharon thought some of us could give him some points to share about Resurrection. Jack's focus is on racism, he can mention Resurrection has a program pertaining to that issue.

Joe McClory mentioned talking to Sue Dagenais; she is going to try to arrange to drop off many meals at Emmanuel Dining Room (EDR), and perhaps those 21 volunteers could help. They may try to make 100 meals twice a month. This relates to 1<sup>st</sup> goal above. Sharon will talk with Sue about coordinating for EDR.

Debbie said people may not want to ask for help, but we know some people who may be ill or have some needs. Sharon said we can have some of the

meal volunteers call and check on those people.

Linda said it's good to work through Debbie to reach parishioners. Linda suggested that some agencies we work with will know some people/families who need help. This could be a move beyond our own parish.

Sharon said she would put Linda's suggestion to social concerns group.

Linda is coordinating holiday giving for Thanksgiving. She is waiting for one more reply and then will publicize.

Dick pointed out this (bringing Christ to others) is another term for evangelization. We are called as Catholics to evangelize; we typically don't go knocking on doors, but there have been some programs in other parishes, and perhaps there could be something that could be adapted. Alpha was a program he mentioned. Sharon suggested they talk off line.

About attracting new parishioners, Fr. Greg had previously talked about bringing speakers with expertise like marketing, to talk about what things we could do easily, such as with the website, or to better position us.

Joe Quinn suggested offering adoration for a couple of hours once a week. Maybe that could spread organically, and he suggested maybe there could be prerecorded music. Resurrection could be a place to come for quiet.

Sharon said Fr. Greg had had the idea to have a dessert Tuesday, or Moms' Friday, so just a way to open up the church to people. Debbie asked if this was for now or after the pandemic. Sharon pointed out there'd have to be pandemic precautions. Debbie said people have had to have permission to be in the church so far during the pandemic.

John Falkowski said we're in between St. Catherine's and Holy Angels, but there are a lot of Hispanic families in the area that are not necessarily connected and could maybe have a place in Resurrection. He said we need to do outreach to Hispanic and African American families. There are a lot of people within a mile or so of Resurrection. He thought they may not be Catholic, but they're not going anywhere, so we could reach out to them. A lot of parents may not speak English. Abbey Walk apartments, for example, John said, may have a number of Hispanic people. He mentioned there are lots of apartment complexes and renters in the area and we need to reach out to other ethnic groups.

Jim Lennon said he has been teaching in the CFP program for 9 years, and has 4 kids who've been through it. His wife teaches public school. He knows the Hispanic kids we're talking about, and thinks we need to offer something to them, and that something could be tutoring. We have a lot of parishioners who

might be able to help. If we could coordinate even a couple of tutoring setups it would be helpful. We have a lot of parishioners with advanced degrees. This could be done over zoom or in person. (Huntington does do in person tutoring.)

Jim also pointed out that the way a lot of young families think about their interaction with a church is that they want to get the sacraments. Because people are so busy, St. Mary of the Assumption was able to get people to buy into a summer CFP program (somewhat of a crash course). This was like a summer camp, and then they only had to go a couple of times during the year to finish. A lot of families who were not parishioners were signed up in this program at St. Mary's. Jim said he only had 4 kids in CFP today. If we could rethink our CFP program, maybe a self-paced program would work and maybe we could subsidize it. This way, people could fulfill their CFP obligations and be eligible for first communion, confirmation, etc. That's how many people see it. The idea is to make it easier for people, and Jim thinks it could attract some new parishioners. This would be a good way to meet families' needs in this pandemic time. He knows Nancy has been using an on line textbook, We Believe. The kids are usually on line; today was the first day they were there in person.

Sharon asked if Nancy and Elaine and others interested could brainstorm.

Nancy said they are doing a hybrid program right now, with younger grades and older grades alternating weeks. Sharon asked for this to be taken off line to put a concrete plan together.

Jack said he would be willing to help. He is active with the Latino community and would be willing to use his contacts through the Delaware Hispanic commission.

Sharon will email Jim and Nancy to set up a call.

John pointed out Brian Coté was teaching ESL at Gander and he could do that at resurrection. Mary Beth said she is willing to help with a tutoring program.

John said we have in the parish the Cardena family. Julie Cardena is a Spanish teacher at St. Mark's. Last year she had 2 boys and a girl come through the RCIA process to receive Eucharist and confirmation. She also has a child in the program for 1<sup>st</sup> Eucharist. We could ask her for help in reaching out to Hispanic families. Gabriela Helfinger is another parishioner, from Mexico, and she and her son have been coming regularly to 9:30 Mass.

Sharon suggested we think of others we also might ask to help with this.

A discussion regarding the involvement of women in the Church and issues of

racial injustice is summarized below.

Sharon reported there was a peace week event last week on racial injustice. Resources were provided for people to expand their awareness. We need to continue the conversation and find a way to make a difference.

Joe Quinn asked if there was discussion about continuing it; he thought others wanted to continue the discussion that began with last week's event. Sharon said she will talk to Sue Dagenais about that.

John mentioned Fr. Hynes' program on racial justice in the Church, with another session this Wednesday, which is similar.

Jim Lennon said his understanding is that Resurrection was possibly the first parish to have female altar servers. We have a female president of Pastoral Council. We have been a leader in the community in getting women involved in the Church. This could be promoted. He wondered if we get something published in the dialog or News Journal? Jim feels like Resurrection is a place where people push for women to have a bigger role.

Regarding racial injustice, Jim suggested we consider offering a (partial) scholarship to St. Peter's Cathedral. All the kids there get financial assistance but usually just for K-8, and then they don't make the leap to Catholic high school (due to financial considerations); they fall through the cracks. If we could make up the difference for a few students it would be great.

Sharon thought the scholarship idea is great. John suggested we need to support things like Serviam, or the schools the Oblates support, as opposed to supporting Padua, Salesianum, and so on, which do provide scholarships, but these are the equivalent of the cost of a college tuition. We should try to support other schools that provide opportunities. For example, John mentioned Jesuit Christo Rey school in Philly, and suggested maybe we should try to support having one in Wilmington.

Sharon said Jim's point is great – the idea of a scholarship, particularly to underserved populations. She suggested we talk about what we want to do, and asked if Jim is okay with continuing to dialog. Jim thought \$10,000 would be enough and the schools would make up the difference. If you can get the parish kids connected with another population, that would be a great thing.

Sharon asked if there were other thoughts about women in the church. Sharon said we do have a lot of women involved at Resurrection. Obviously we have had female altar servers. Does anyone have other thoughts?

Joe Quinn mentioned the Pope's intention this month is that the laity would become more involved in the church and women be given more authority.

Debbie mentioned the Tamil community as a success, we did welcome them. There are about 20 families now, and they came one by one.

**7. Guidance: Role of Pastoral Council in working on goals / how to proceed**

We have the Pastoral Council and associated committees. It seems like everyone is doing something now that we have a smaller council.

Jim Lennon is on the diocesan board for catholic schools, and they've realized they need more committees to do the work, and also work with ad hoc committees/ members. That could be used to move things forward.

Sharon thought a month is a long time to wait to talk about a lot of these things.

Joe McClory said he is willing to help with Emmanuel Dining Room and he is willing to do some tutoring.

Jack said he could do ESL teaching too.

Mary Beth is interested in the scholarship idea, and asked if Jim wants to pursue that, and he is happy to be involved. It is probably right to have an ad hoc committee to consider this. Jack said it's probably good to check with Mike Reis. Mary Beth said she is not talking about cutting into parish finances; this should be separate. If you have enough people, it might not be too hard. Pat pointed out we need to be careful not to strand any students if funding should become a problem. All agreed.

Jim said we need an information gathering step where we would go to the various schools and see what the schools are willing to do to help, if, for example, the parish offered a 4 year scholarship.

Sharon said Jim, Nancy, Elaine, and Sharon need to meet separately, make sure kids don't fall through the cracks.

**8. Would others like to volunteer for prayer? Mary Beth volunteered.**

9. Jane said she will have to resign from the liturgy committee and therefore from Pastoral Council. Her lymphoma is under control, but her meds exhaust her. Jane thanked us for the opportunity to serve and asked for our prayers. Council members expressed their appreciation.

10. For information, Fr. Greg is bringing a new person in to finance council who will talk about some investment of parish funds. Mike Reis said Fr. Greg also invited anyone interested to attend next finance council meeting, October 21 at 6:30, but they would need to let him or Mike know in advance so seating can be arranged.

11. **Next gathering:** November 8, 2020

12. **Closing prayer** was led by Sharon.

13. **Adjournment** was at 7:16 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pat Sormani